

## **Andrew Jackson to Anthony Butler, March 15, 1841, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.**

class=MsoNormal>TO COLONEL ANTHONY BUTLER. 1

1 From the collection of Jackson MSS. in the possession of Miss Pauline Wilcox, of Washington, D. C.

Hermitage, March 15, 1841.

Sir, I have received your letter, dated West Hill, near Independence, February 14th 1841, without stating in what country West Hill near Independence is situate. I have read it with calm deliberation and altho it commences in the spirit of friendship, I am constrained to say as a whole, from its inuendoes and threats, of violating confidence reposed , degrading to the all honorable minds, and inconsistent with that high honorable bearing that I once thought Col. A. Butler possessed. You are well aware that I put all threats of dishonourable men at defense, that I never have abandoned a friend, and altho I have hugged to my bosom some vipers, who after being cherished and fostered by me, have attempted to sting me, but whose poison recoiled upon them, and fell harmless at my feet. From the tenor of your letter before me, as a whole , I should not reply to it, was it not that my silence, after I am dead and gone, might be exhi[bi]ted by you to the world as admitting the false charges, that from rumors of which you say, "is from high authority," whose name is withheld, and which you say "you do not believe;" But rather at this late day, is made the basis of your letter before me. But to the charge. you say "Public report has informed you (me) that I am charged by Genl. Jackson with having made use improperly of the public money, and that (I) you are a defaulter to the government to a large sum." In your comment upon this charge you say, "that (I) you must believe, and do believe, that

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nothing ever passed (your) my lips to warrant the report, that it is the malicious fabrication of some malicious unprincipled scoundrel to do (me) you, an injury, who borrows (your) my authority to give it currency." To which I answer, that notwithstanding, "the author[it]y," which you say, "is a high one," and carries with it a san[c]tion and "support from the name quoted", when no name is given by you, you have judged correctly when you say, you do not believe that "nothing" ever passed my lips to warrant such a report, that it is the malicious fabrication of some malicious scoundrel to do you an injury, etc., etc., for I do assure you, that the first intimation I ever heard of you having used the public money improperly, or being a public defaulter to a large sum, is from your letter before me, nor do I know to this day whether your accounts with the Government are closed. Had you returned to Washing[ton] City as your instructions required, then Sir, your explanations would have [been] heard by me with a just and friendly ear, and justice have been done you. this you did not do, but at this late day, rumors fabricated as basis of your letter, from its dishonorable bearing, it gives me pain, for your sake, to read it, and produces the necessity to give you a laconic statement of the facts of the case.

It is true that from your various statements, we did believe you would be successfull in obtaining a cesion of Texas. so desirable for the safety 0119 95 and prosperity of this whole union. But from the delay in closing the negotiation, when you returned to Washington, we did despair of your success, but from your reitarated declarations to Mr. Forsythe secretary of State and myself that everything was arranged, and if permitted to return, that you were certain of success, you were told by us, that unless you were certain that you could succeed, we did not wish you to return, upon which you reiterated the assurance and could return to Washington by the first of December thereafter, with the assurance that you would bring the treaty of cession of Texas with you ready to be laid before the Senate for ratification. Upon this your so often reiterated assurance your instructions were made out, and read to you in my office by Mr. Forsythe to see whether I approved them. I did approve them. These are facts, and when you state otherwise your memory has failed you or you willfully misrepresent. These instructions were to be your

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guide in the nego[tia]tion, and you were informed of their contents. You left us, with the pledge that you would hasten back to Mexico, by the way of New York, Charleston, S. C., and direct to Mexico, with our full confidence. The first that we heard of you, and we heard it with great regret, was that you were charged with carrying into Mexico a large quantity of merchandize, under your diplomatic character free of duty, the next charge, that you had quarrelled with the Mexican government, challenged one of the heads of its departments to personal combat, and a premtory demand for your recall. Receiving no communication from you, of explanation or excuse for indiscretions charged, you were in pursuance of all comity existing between independent nations, recalled.

[ Remainder of letter missing. ]